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For more information, contact:

Angela de Rocha, Director of Communications

Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services

785-806-7482

KDADS ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF PACE PROGRAM TO 51 ADDITIONAL COUNTIES

Offers flexibility to older adults in meeting their healthcare needs

TOPEKA – Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Secretary Shawn Sullivan announced today the expansion of a program that provides community based services and care to the elderly as an alternative to traditional Medicare and Medicaid services. The Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) will expand the number of counties where PACE programs is available from eight counties to 59 counties.

Via Christi, which began offering PACE in Wichita in 2002, will be expanding its current program in Sedgwick County to five adjacent counties. Via Christi has also been awarded six counties, including Johnson County, in the Northeast part of Kansas and will be partnering with local providers to offer PACE in this area in 2015. In addition, Via Christi has been awarded 12 counties in the Southeast corner of the state including Parsons, Pittsburg and Independence.

Midland Care, which began offering PACE in Topeka in 2007, will be expanding its current program from seven to 10 counties in their Shawnee County catchment area. Midland Care will be partnering with Kansas City Hospice and Palliative Care to open a new PACE program in 2015 in a five-county area in Northeast Kansas that includes Wyandotte County.

Bluestem Communities of Hesston has been awarded the PACE program for 20 counties that includes Newton, Hutchinson, Salina, Junction City and Manhattan. Bluestem plans to begin offering PACE services in 2015.

Until now, the Kansas PACE program was available only to consumers in Sedgwick, Shawnee, Douglas, Jackson, Jefferson Osage, Pottawatomie and Wabaunsee counties, serving approximately 377 consumers. Thirty one states have PACE programs, with more than 25,000 participants in 103 PACE programs nationwide.

PACE was established as a way to provide consumers, their families, caregivers and health-care providers the flexibility to meet health-care needs while helping consumers to continue to live in their communities. PACE provides all medical and social services for older adults who qualify for nursing home care, serving PACE individuals who are age 55 or older, certified by the state to need nursing home care and are able to live safely in the community at the time of enrollment.

Although all PACE participants must be certified to need nursing home care to enroll, only about 7 percent of PACE participants nationally reside in a nursing home. If a PACE enrollee does need nursing home care, the PACE program pays for it and continues to coordinate the enrollee's care.

“PACE will offer eligible individuals in our expansion counties an alternative to that allows them to stay in their homes and communities,” Secretary Sullivan said.

“There are an estimated 11,900 people in Kansas who are clinically and financially eligible for the PACE program. The expansion we are announcing today will allow us to enroll more of those eligible Kansans in PACE, and with the help of PACE keep those enrolled safely in their communities,” the Secretary said.

“PACE has shown it can enhance the quality of life and independence for older Kansans, maximizing the dignity of and respect for older adults while preserving and supporting their families. It allows them to live in their communities as long as possible,” he said. “We would like to eventually offer this kind of care in every Kansas county.”

PACE features a comprehensive delivery system with integrated Medicare and Medicaid financing. It is similar to KanCare, as it is a capitated system in which the contracting organizations assume full financial risk for beneficiary care without limits on amount, duration, or scope of services. As such, it is revenue neutral.

PACE programs assemble a team of professional and paraprofessional staff to assess each participant's needs, develop a plan of care for them and deliver all the services they require, including hospital and other acute care, and when necessary, nursing facility services. The PACE provider coordinates and sees to the delivery of all needed preventive, primary, acute and long term care services. The PACE service package must include all Medicare and Medicaid covered services, such as (but not limited to):

- Primary Care (including doctor and nursing services)
- Hospital Care
- Medical Specialty Services
- Prescription Drugs
- Nursing Home Care
- Emergency Services
- Home Care
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Adult Day Care
- Recreational Therapy
- Meals
- Dentistry
- Nutritional Counseling
- Social Services
- Laboratory/X-ray Services
- Social Work Counseling
- Transportation

“Studies show that PACE participants have improved health status, quality of life, lower mortality rates, more and better choices over how to spend their time and greater confidence in their ability to deal with life's problems,” Secretary Sullivan said.

The map attached to this release shows the PACE expansion counties and the service provider in those counties.

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The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services mission is to foster an environment that promotes security, dignity and independence for all Kansans.